

Atty's Docket: 101215-117

**CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME**

If any extension of time for this response is required, Applicants request that this be considered a petition therefore. Please charge the required fee to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

**ADDITIONAL FEES**

Please charge any further insufficiency of fees, or credit any excess to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

**REMARKS**

Claims 9, 10 and 12-21 are pending and have been rejected under 35 USC § 112. In response, claims 9, 13, 19 and 21 have been amended, and new claims 22-24 have been added. No new claim or amendment adds new matter.

**Improper Dependent Claims**

Claim 19 has been amended to require only a mixture of sulfur-containing amino acids and/or the amides or esters thereof. This properly narrows the scope of claim 9 which encompasses one or more sulfur-containing amino acids.

Claim 20 has been canceled.

**New claims 22-24 have been added.**

Claim 22 requires that the leaching fluid be only amides and/or esters.

Claim 24 is similar, except that it is dependent upon claim 21.

Claim 21 merely recites the concentration.

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**New matter**

The claims have been amended to delete the allegedly offending terms, and instead recite the optional inclusion of a buffer. This is disclosed on page 3 in the context of adjusting the pH.

**Enablement**

Claim 19 has been amended to conform with Examiner's suggested language, and is believed to address Examiner's concern.

**Indefiniteness**

The language rendering addition of the bacteria as optional is deleted.

However, the body of the claim recites two different points in the process at which the bacteria may participate in the process.

It is respectfully suggested that the amended claim is not indefinite.

Claim 13 has been amended in accordance with Examiner's suggestion.

Claim 20 has been deleted.

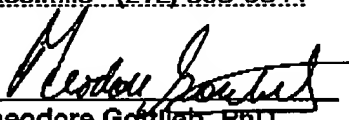
**CONCLUSION**

It is believed in good faith that all of the issues raised by the Examiner have been properly addressed by the foregoing amendments.

Accordingly, allowance of the claims is requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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